



August 4, 2015

Anthony R. Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: FY 2015, Letter of Support for the City of Wichita's U.S. Department of Transportation's TIGER Discretionary Grant Application

Dear Mr. Foxx:

The Governing Body of the City of Bel Aire received a presentation on the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant program offered through the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) by Scott Knebel with the Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department at our July 21st regular Council meeting. We understand that the initiative's goal is to encourage states and localities to work together to bring more innovative, cross-modal proposals to the table and that priority will be given to transportation projects demonstrating strong collaboration among a broad range of stakeholders and projects that are the product of a robust planning process.

The City of Bel Aire borders the City of Wichita and is located just five miles from the Wichita State University campus. WSU students, faculty and other staff live in Bel Aire and commute to the campus. As a result, Bel Aire looks for ways to partner with WSU as well as the City of Wichita. The Bel Aire City Council strongly supports collaboration efforts and is currently working with Wichita on several projects including animal control, street reconstruction and walking / bike path integration.

This proposal is in alignment with DOT TIGER goals and the South Kansas **Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership** (IMCP) regional strategy, which prioritizes access to advanced manufacturing research and innovation as primary catalytic public investments for the region. The City of Wichita's multi-modal transportation connectivity proposal will improve and expand access to WSU's Innovation Campus through improvements to streets, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure. Increased access to and expanded capacity of the Innovation Campus will move our economy up the value chain of global competitiveness by growing the firms, networks, and traded sectors that drive broad-based prosperity.

The City of Wichita's **Multi-Modal Transportation Connections for the Wichita State University Innovation Campus** will provide the following:

- A safe, connected, and accessible transportation system for the multi-modal movement of people and innovation.

- A strong foundation for the commercialization of ideas, and the creation and expansion of firms and jobs via proximity and collaboration.
- A vehicle for both revenue growth as well as a more efficient use of existing and strategically planned infrastructure.
- The opportunity for expanding employment and educational opportunities for disadvantaged populations, given that the Innovation Campus is located in low- and moderate-income and historically underutilized business (HUB) zone neighborhoods.
- The potential for denser residential and employment patterns and the leveraging of mass transit.

Such a project would directly benefit the City of Bel Aire's connectivity and citizens. Our goal is to make strategic long-term investments in the innovation and industrial ecosystem of south central Kansas that will operationalize the vision to out-innovate the rest of the state as well as world and spur the development of twenty-first century jobs and industries.

Please accept this letter as Bel Aire's unanimous support of the project and appreciate your consideration of such an award.

Sincerely,



David Austin
Mayor

Cc Scott Knebel